

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

STATUS OF CLAIMS

In response to the Office Action dated November 29, 2007, claims 9, 12, 17 and 18 have been amended and claims 1-8, 11, 14-16 and 19 have been canceled. Claims 9, 10, 12, 13, 17 and 18 are now pending in this application. No new matter has been added.

The indication that claims 9, 10, 12 and 13 are objected to, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims is acknowledged and appreciated.

By this response, claim 9 has been amended to be in independent form including all the limitations of base claim 8 and claim 12 has been amended to be in independent form including all the limitations of base claim 11. Therefore, claims 9, 10, 12 and 13, as amended, should be allowable.

REJECTION OF CLAIMS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102 AND § 103

I. Claims 1-3 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Walton et al. (USPN 7,095,709).

The rejections are moot as to canceled claims 1-3.

II. Claims 4, 6, 8, 11, 14 and 17-19 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Yamamoto (USPN 6,151,372).

The rejections are moot as to canceled claims 4, 6, 8, 11, 14 and 19.

By this response, claim 17 has been amended to recite the specific limitations of amended claim 3 instead of referring to claim 3, and the specific limitations of amended claim 9 instead of referring to claim 8. As amended claim 9 should be allowable, amended claim 17 should be allowable also.

In addition, claim 18 has been amended to recite the specific limitations of amended claim 3 instead of referring to claim 3, and the specific limitations of amended claim 12 instead of referring to claim 11. As amended claim 12 should be allowable, amended claim 18 should be allowable also.

III. Claims 5 and 7 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamamoto (USPN 6,151,372) in view of Yamamoto et al. (USPN 6,700,865).

The rejections are moot as to canceled claims 5 and 7.

IV. Claims 15 and 16 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamamoto (USPN 6,151,372) in view of Walton et al.

The rejections are moot as to canceled claims 15 and 16.

VI. In view of the above, the allowance of claims 9, 10, 12, 13, 17 and 18, as amended, is respectfully solicited.

CONCLUSION

In view of the above amendment, applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Edward J. Wise (Reg. No. 34,523) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37.C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.14; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,


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